Project Phoenix

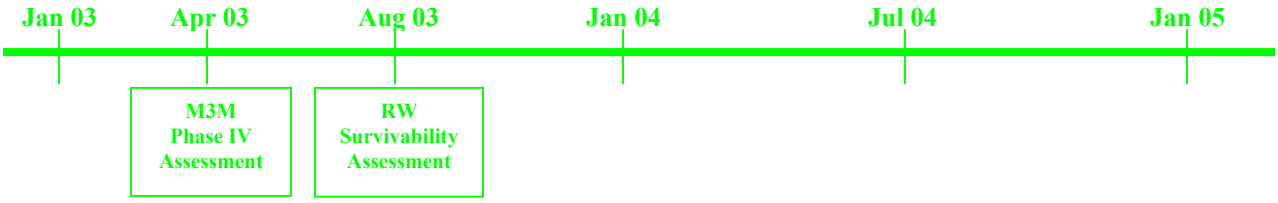
Purpose: Project Phoenix has a three-fold purpose. To continue the assessment of the M3M .50 cal weapon system aboard assault support helicopters to determine if it can effectively meet the requirement for a common defensive weapon system. To examine rotary wing aircraft effectiveness and survivability during urban operations. To discover and evaluate enabling technologies and training devices to aid the aviation fleet in training against MANPAD threats.

Background: The Lab began examining the urban environment in 1998 as part of the Urban Warrior series of experiments and has continued urban experimentation through Project Metropolis. Project Phoenix originated during Project Metropolis experimentation and was formed to examine the aviation aspect of urban operations. Project Phoenix has focused on examining the survivability of rotary wing (RW) assets against MANPAD and AAA threats in the urban environment. At the same time, close-air support (CAS), CASEVAC, resupply, assault support, and reconnaissance operations have been examined to determine the effectiveness and ability of aircrews to perform these missions in an urban environment with various threats. In 2001 Project Phoenix was designated to assess the effectiveness and utility of the M3M .50 caliber weapon system as a possible system to meet the requirement for a common defensive weapon system (CDWS) for our assault support helicopters. The assessment is being done in cooperation with MAWTS-1, NAVAIR, HQMC, HMX-1, and Fabrique Nationale (FN). The third phase of a four-phased assessment was recently completed at MAWTS-1.

Description: Project Phoenix examines the effectiveness of current tactics used by RW aircraft conducting urban operations and then incorporates different methods, such as using sniper assets to suppress enemy air threats, to determine the tactics' ability to enhance aviation's support during urban operations. In addition Project Phoenix will continue the assessment of the M3M .50 caliber weapon system. The fourth, and final phase will include assessment of the M3M on the CH-46E, CH-53E, and UH-1N. The assessment is beginning the transition to Naval Air Systems Command where PMA-242 will be the program office. This effort will be conclude by the end of FY '03.

Deliverable Product(s): Assessment reports and recommended changes to tactics, techniques and procedures.

Milestones:



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